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VI. — *Altars on the Roman Comic Stage*

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THE prevailing tradition regarding the presence of altars on the Roman comic stage is that there were two, one on the right to Liber, the other on the left to the particular divinity whose *ludi* were being celebrated. This tradition rests on the following passage in Donatus, *de Comoedia*, VIII, 3: In scaena duae arae poni solebant: dextera Liberi, sinistra eius dei, cui ludi fiebant. unde Terentius in Andria (IV, 3, 11) ait 'ex ara sume hinc verbenas tibi.' As late as 1904 Dr. Otto Engelhardt accepts this tradition in his dissertation, *Die Illustrationen der Terenzhandschriften* (p. 18; cf. p. 62); but although the standard works on Greek and Roman life either adopt the same view¹ or, more cautiously, avoid definite statements on the matter,² it can hardly be possible that Dr. Engelhardt was ignorant of the questionable character of the Donatus excerpt, since he quotes from Wessner's edition, where the whole passage is printed in italics³ on the basis of Sabbadini's discussion in *Studi ital.* III, 361 ff.

As a matter of fact, the tradition of the two altars was formally questioned⁴ as early as 1884 by Dziatzko in his sec-

¹ Compare, e.g., Oehmichen in Mueller's *Handbuch*, v, 3 B, *Das Bühnenwesen der Griechen und Römer* (1890), p. 240.

² In Baumeister, *Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums* (1885), s.v. *Lustspiel*, II, 827, Arnold speaks of the customary altar before the Greek house in the Greek New Comedy. Under *Römische Komödie*, p. 830, he says: "Bei der Dekoration der *palliata* bildete ebenfalls gewöhnlich das Privathaus den Mittelpunkt: es war mit wirklich brauchbaren Fensteröffnungen und auch mit erkerartigen Ausladungen versehen (Vitruv. v, 6, 8). Ausserdem waren auch noch Versatzstücke, z. B. Altäre (Wieseler, Theatergebäude u. Denkmäler des Bühnenwesens bei den Griechen und den Römern S. 66: B. Arnold, *Das Altrömische Theatergebäude*, S. 17) auf der Bühne aufgestellt."

³ Cf. Wessner, *Praefatio*, p. xlviii: "Inclinatis autem litteris reddi ea imprimis volui quibus integrum scholium in duas vel plures partes disiectum esse videbatur: hic illic etiam parva additamenta (cf. And. prol. 6²; 16³; 24²; 25³; I, I, 1⁶; 2¹; al.) eodem typorum genere exprimenda curavi."

⁴ Extreme is van Wageningen's statement (*Scaenica Romana* [1907], p. 16):

ond edition of the *Phormio* (Einl. S. 25, Anm. 3), and the doubt which he there expressed is repeated in almost the same words in the third edition, the Dziatzko-Hauler *Phormio* of 1897 (Allgem. Einl. S. 36), where a statement of the traditional view is immediately modified by the following footnote (3): "Wahrscheinlicher ist es Dziatzko, dass auf offener Bühne nur ein Altar (in der Mitte) sich befand (vgl. besonders Plaut. Most. 1094 f.), und zwar meist dem Apollo Agyieus zugeeignet: s. Plaut. Bacch. 172 f., Merc. 676 ff., Don. zu And. 726 (IV, 3, 11), Eun. 85 (I, 2, 5) und vom griech. Theater Menand. Frag. inc. 212 (Mein.; Kock a. O. III, Men. Frg. 740) μαρτύρομαι ναὶ μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω τουτονὶ | καὶ τὰς θύρας (vgl. Meineke zur St.), Poll. IV, 123. Unter Umständen war er einer anderen Lokalgottheit geweiht, wie der ephesischen Diana im Miles Gl. (v. 411), der Venus im Rudens. Ausserdem konnten vor einzelnen Häusern und in deren Bereiche Privaltäre stehen, wie im Curculio ein Altar der Venus vor dem Hause des Kupplers Cappadox (v. 71). Bei der Annahme nur eines Altares auf der Bühne entsteht aber die Schwierigkeit, dass dann der römischen Festgottheit an anderer Stelle als auf der Bühne ein Altar errichtet gewesen sein müsste."

It is not strange that scholars have questioned the authority of the passage quoted from *de Comoedia*, because the Donatus commentary on *And.* IV, 3, 11 (726)—the line cited in the *de Comoedia* passage—distinctly assigns Liber to tragedy, Apollo of the Highways to comedy, and makes no mention of the special divinity in whose honor the play was performed.¹ The comment² runs as follows: 1. EX ARA

"In scaena duas aras poni solitas esse Donatus (de Com. VIII, 3) refert, dexteram Liberi, sinistram eius dei, cui ludi fierent, sed in fabulis Plautinis et Terentianis modo unam aram in scaena esse positam Dziatzko (Praefatio ad *Phorm.*, p. 25) demonstravit. Haec plerumque Apollini ἀγυεὶς dedicata erat, interdum Dianae vel Veneri, si illae deae eo loco, quo fabula agebatur, magno in honore erant. Sed altera ara, quae deo, cui ludi fiebant, consecrata erat, non in pulpito, sed in alia theatri parte collocata fuisse videtur."

¹ The *Andria* was first performed at the Ludi Megalenses in 166 B.C.

² Karsten (*Mnemosyne*, 1904, p. 240), in his attempt to separate the true Donatus commentary from all subsequent additions to it, assigns to Donatus part one of this scholium, to a "philosophus" part two, and to "alius magister" part

SUME H. V. T. 'ex ara' Apollinis scilicet quem Ἀγυαῖον Menander vocat. 2. Aut quod Apollini comoedia est dicata, in cuius honorem aram statuebant comoediam celebrantes. 3. Apollini ergo comoedia, Libero patri tragoedia. This same relation between Apollo and comedy is tacitly assumed in the Donatus comment on *Eun.* 1, 2, 5: ACCEDE AD IGNEM HUNC aptius 'ignem' meretricem accipiemus quam aram Apollinis Agyiei, vel quia amator uritur, ut (Verg. *Ecl.* III, 66) 'at mihi sese offert ultro meus ignis Amyntas' vel quia avida *et avara* est, ut ignis, alimentorum.

This connection of Apollo with comedy is explained by Euanthius (*de Fabula*, 1, 3) as due to the rustic origin of comedy: at vero nondum coactis in urbem Atheniensibus, cum Apollini Νομίῳ vel Ἀγυαίῳ id est pastorum vicorumve praesidi deo, instructis aris in honorem divinae rei circum Atticae vicos villas pagos et compita festivum carmen sollemniter cantaretur, ἀπὸ τῶν κωμῶν καὶ τῆς ὥδῃς comoedia vocitata est, ut opinor, a pagis et cantilena composito nomine, vel ἀπὸ τοῦ κωμάζειν καὶ ἄδειν, quod est comessatum ire cantantes. quod appotis sollemni die vel amatorie lascivientibus [choris comicis] non absurdum est.

However, the explanation generally given for the presence of Apollo's altar on the Roman comic stage is the much more obvious one that such an altar regularly belongs before the Greek¹ house and is, therefore, a normal feature of the setting in *fabulae palliatae*. From the abundant evidence on this point a few of the best-known passages may be cited:

Harpocration, s.v. Ἀγυῖās: Ἀγυῖās, Δημοσθένης ἐν τῷ κατὰ Μειδίον, κατὰ τὰ πάτρια καὶ κνισσᾶν ἀγυῖās. ἔνιοι μὲν ὀξύνουσι θηλυκῶς χρώμενοι, οἷον τὰς ὁδοὺς· βέλτιον δὲ περισπᾶν, ὥς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀγυῖας, ὡς σαφές ποιοῦσιν Ἀριστοφάνης τε ἐν Σφηξί καὶ Εὐπολῖς. ἀγυῖες δ' ἐστὶ κίων

three. Sabbadini (*Studi ital.* III, 362) also believes that part one is the original form of this scholium, and that the other parts are interpolations.

¹ Eugraphius, in his comment on *And.* IV, 3, 11 (726), apparently forgets the Greek character of the setting in *fabulae palliatae*, for he assumes that the *ara* there mentioned is Vesta's: Romanis omnibus mos est in atrio, hoc est in vestibulo, habere Vestam — quippe cum inde vestibulum nominarint —, cui sacrificium cotidie facerent, et illic ei fuerat ara collocata. idcirco dictum est 'ex ara sume hinc verbenas tibi.'

εἰς ὁξὺν λήγων, ὃν ἰσῳᾶσι πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν. ἰδίους δὲ εἶναί φασιν αὐτοὺς Ἀπόλλωνος, οἱ δὲ Διονύσου, οἱ δὲ ἄμφοιν. ἔστιν οὖν τὸ ὀλόκληρον ἀγνιάς, καὶ κατὰ τὴν Ἀττικῶν διάλεκτον ἀγνιάς· καθὰ καὶ Στειριᾶς καὶ Μηλιάς καὶ τὰ παραπλήσια λέγουσιν ἐν συναλοιφῇ. Ἀριστοφάνης ἐν Ὅρνισι·

μηλοσφαγεῖν τε βουθύτοις ἐπ' ἐσχάrais
κνισσῶν τ' ἀγνιάς.

φασὶ δ' αὐτὸ ἴδιον εἶναι Δωριέων, ὡς δῆλον ποιεῖ Διευχίδας ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ τῶν Μεγαρικῶν. εἶεν ἂν καὶ οἱ παρὰ τοῖς Ἀττικοῖς λεγόμενοι ἀγνιεύς, οἱ πρὸ τῶν οἰκῶν βωμοί, ὡς φασι Κρατῖνος καὶ Μένανδρος, καὶ Σοφοκλῆς ἐν τῷ Λαοκῶντι, μετὰ γὰρ τὰ Ἀθηναίων ἔθη εἰς Τροίαν, φησί·

λάμπει δ' ἀγνιεύς βωμὸς ἀτμίζων πυρὶ
σμύρνης σταλαγμοῖς, βαρβάρων εὐσομίας.

Suidas, s.v. ἀγνιάς, gives the substance of the above quotation from Harpocration and adds: καὶ ἀγνιεύς, ὁ πρὸ τῶν αὐλίων θυρῶν κωνοειδῆς κίων, ἱερὸς Ἀπόλλωνος καὶ αὐτὸς θεός.

Hesychius, s.v. ἀγνιεύς: ὁ πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἐστὼς βωμὸς ἐν σχήματι κίονος.

Schol. ad Eur. *Phoen.* 631: τὸν ἀγνιέα πρὸ τῶν πυλῶν ἵστασαν· κίων δὲ οὗτος ἦν εἰς ὁξὺν ἀπολήγων, ἐπεὶ πρὸ τῶν πυλῶν ἵστασαν ἀγάλματα τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος ὡς ἀλεξικάκου δεσπότης καὶ φύλακος τῶν ὁδῶν. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο ἀγνιεύς.

Schol. ad Aristoph. *Vesp.* 875: γείτον Ἀγνιεύς¹ περὶ τοῦ Ἀγνιεύς Ἀπόλλωνος ἰδίως Εὐτυχίας οὕτως γράφει· “Ἐν δὲ τῷ ἱατρῷ τοῦτο διαμένει, καὶ ἔτι καὶ νῦν ἐστὶν ὡς Ἀγνιεύς τῶν Δωριέων οἰκησάντων ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἀνάθημα. καὶ οὕτως καταμηνύει, ὅτι Δωριέων ἐστὶ τὰ Ἑλλήνων· τούτοις γὰρ ἐπὶ τὰς στρατιᾶς φάσματος οἱ Δωριεῖς ἀπομιμούμενοι τὰς ἀγνιάς ἰσῳᾶσιν ἔτι καὶ νῦν τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι.” Ἄλλως. πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν ἔθος εἶχον κίονας εἰς ὁξὺν λήγοντας, ὡς ὀβελίσκους,² ἰδρύειν εἰς τιμὴν Ἀπόλλωνος Ἀγνιεύς.

¹ Starkie, *ad loc.*, says: “The address in Pherecr. 87 is similar, viz., ὦ δέσποτ' Ἀγνιεύ, ταῦτά νυν μένησθέ μοι; cf. also Eur. *Phoen.* 634, Plaut. *Bacch.* 170.” See his note further.

² Cf. Pausanias, viii, 32, 4: “A little lower down are images of gods, also made in the square form (παρέχονται δὲ καὶ οὗτοι σχήμα τετράγωνον) and surnamed Workers; they are Athena Worker and Apollo God of Streets.” Cf. Thucyd. vi, 27: Ἐν δὲ τούτῳ, ὅσοι Ἑρμαὶ ἦσαν λίθινοι ἐν τῇ πόλει τῇ Ἀθηναίων (εἰσὶ δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἐπιχώριον, ἡ τετράγωνος ἐργασία, πολλοὶ καὶ ἐν ἰδίοις προθύροις καὶ ἐν ἱεροῖς), μᾶλλον οἱ πλεῖστοι περιεκόπησαν τὰ πρόσωπα.

Macrobius, *Sat.* i, 9, 6 : Etenim sicut Nigidius quoque refert, apud Graecos Apollo colitur, qui *Θυραῖος* vocatur, eiusque aras ante fores suas celebrant, ipsum exitus et introitus demonstrantes potentem : idem Apollo apud illos et *Ἀγνιεύς* nuncupatur, quasi viis praepositus urbanis : illi enim vias quae intra pomoeria sunt *ἀγνιάς* appellant.

That altars and statues of gods were very common,¹ on the Greek stage, whether tragic or comic, is shown by the plays themselves and by scholia like those quoted above (pp. 93 f.), but the only altar which Pollux mentions as a regular part of the stage-setting is, as we should expect in the conventional street scenes of the New Comedy, the *ἀγνιεύς βωμός* (*Onom.* iv, 123) : ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ ἀγνιεύς ἔκειτο βωμός ὁ πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν καὶ τράπεζα πέμματα ἔχουσα, ἣ θεωρὶς ὠνομάζετο. In the Index Verborum of Koerte's *Menandrea* (editio maior, Leipzig, 1904) the name Apollo occurs twelve times — four times in the Vocative case,² from which no inference can be drawn in regard to altars and statues on the stage, eight times in the Accusative case³ in oaths. Of these, vs. 172 (Capps, 242) of the *Periceïromene* is the most interesting, because there some symbol of the god, Apollo, is clearly on the stage :

χαλεπὰ ταῦτα παντελῶς
τὰ πράγματ' ἐστὶ, νῆ τὸν Ἀπόλλω τουτονί.

Furthermore, an altar is visible in this play, as is shown by vss. 421–422 (Capps, 880–881) :

μᾶλλον δὲ κἀγὼ στέφανον ἀπὸ βωμοῦ [ποθεν
ἀφελὼν ἐπιθέσθαι βούλομαι

Here Polemon, about to offer a sacrifice, puts on his head a garland taken from an altar, presumably the altar of the Apollo mentioned in vs. 172 (Capps, 242). In two other cases (*Epitrepontes*, 503, *Samia*, 94) we have a corrupt text

¹ See Mueller in Hermann's *Lehrbuch*, III, 2, 136 ff., and Haigh's (Pickard-Cambridge) *Attic Theatre*³, p. 200.

² *Epitrepontes*, 179 ; *Periceïromene*, 440 (Capps, 899) ; *Samia*, 222 (Capps, 365), 225 (Capps, 368).

³ *Epitrepontes*, 183, 457 (Capps, 663), 503 (Capps, 735) ; *Heros*, 39 ; *Periceïromene*, 138 (Capps, 208), 172 (Capps, 242) ; *Samia*, 94 (Capps, 97), 251 (Capps, 394).

which has been variously emended. Koerte's reading of the former is

. . . σε, νή τὸν Ἀπόλλω [τουτονί.

Though Capps (735) emends the end of this same line somewhat differently, as follows:

「ὥς εὖ ποῶν」 σε, νή τὸν Ἀπόλλω 「καὶ θεούς.」

he frankly admits (ad vs. 735) that the other reading is possible, in which case Onesimus makes a gesture towards the Apollo statue at the door. In *Samia*, 94 (Capps, 97) there is a similar uncertainty, which the two editors treat much as they treated the preceding case, for Koerte adopts Headlam's conjecture and reads

μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον, μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλ[ω τουτονί,

while Capps adopts the more generally accepted

μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον, μὰ τὸν Ἀπ[όλλ]λ[ω], ἔγω μὲν οὐ.

There are several Roman comedies in which Apollo's altar is generally supposed to be on the stage. In the *Aulularia*, the old miser, Euclio, returning from market to complete preparations for his daughter's wedding, finds the doors of his house open, and sounds of confusion issuing from the place. His first thought is for his buried treasure, and he prays (394):

Apollo, quaeso, subveni mi atque adiuva.

In the fourth act of the same play the slave, Strobilus, who has been sent by his young master to watch developments at the miser's house, says (605-607):

Is speculatum huc misit me, ut quae fierent fieret particeps.

Nunc sine omni suspicione in ara hic adsidam sacra.

Hinc ego et huc et illuc potero quid agant arbitrarier.

Lorenz (*Most.* Einl. 13-14) appears to believe that the altar on which Strobilus here settles himself is that of Apollo Ἀγυιεύς, a natural inference when we remember that Euclio, returning home at vs. 394, may easily have seen an *ara Apollinis* before either his own house or that of his neighbor.

Though this inference is generally accepted by editors of the *Aulularia*,¹ to adopt it unqualifiedly is to disregard another perfectly possible interpretation of several related passages. In the scene immediately preceding that in which vss. 605-607 occur, Euclio, left alone on the stage, addresses the pot of gold as follows (580-586):

Edepol ne tu, aula, multos inimicos habes
Atque istuc aurum quod tibi concreditumst.
Nunc hoc mihi factu[m]st optimum, ut te(d) auferam,
Aula[m], in Fidei fanum : ibi abstrudam probe.
Fides, novisti me et ego te : cave sis tibi,
Ne tu in[me]mutassis nomen, si hoc concredudo. 585
Ibo ad te fretus tua, Fides, fiducia.

From these lines, it is not certain that the *fanum Fidei* is on the stage. Again, in the scene beginning with vs. 608, we are, for a time, in doubt. But with Strobilus' speech (616-623) it becomes clear that the shrine is on the stage :

Di immortales quod ego hunc hominem facinus audio <e>loqui :
Se aulam onustam auri abstruisse hic intus in fano Fide[i].
Cave tu illi fidelis, quaeso, potius fueris quam mihi.
Atque hic pater est ut ego opinor huius erus quam amat — ∪ —.
Ibo hinc intro : perscrutabor fanum, si inveniam uspiam 620
Aurum, dum hic est occupatus. sed si re(p)perero, o Fides,
Mulsi congialem plenam faciam tibi fideliā.
Id adeo tibi faciam : verum ego mihi bibam, ubi id fecero.

The presence of the *fanum* on the stage is further confirmed by vss. 620, 645, 655-656, 658-660, 665, 676. Now, unless Strobilus has changed his position during the soliloquy of Euclio (608-615), the *hinc* of 620 denotes the same place on the stage as the *hinc* of 607 ; but, in 620, the probabilities are, at least, not *against* an *ara* before the *fanum Fidei*, as opposed to one before the house of Euclio. Moreover, in

¹ Cf. Ussing, *Aul.* 598 (606, Teubner) : " Arae in proscenio esse solebant, v. Polluc. iv, 123. Talis commemoratur apud Terent. Andr. 726, Most. 1074, Merc. 667, Bacch. 170. Aras occupabant supplices, quo se deorum tutela defenderent, cf. Most. l. l. Ter. Heaut. 975. Sed etiam otiosi homines in altarium gradibus sedere potuerunt, qualis h. l. Strobilus videri vult."

608, *huc et illuc* doubtless refer to those houses, so that *hinc*, if it is to be differentiated from both, would most naturally be the altar before the shrine, which commanded a view of the two neighboring houses. But whether we believe that this altar belonged to Apollo or to Fides, the interesting fact remains that a shrine to Fides is represented in this Athenian play and that a *lucus Silvani* is mentioned further on (674, 766) as being *extra murum*. Either Plautus, with an inconsistency not infrequent in him,¹ has frankly put Roman gods into his Greek play, or Fides and Silvanus are approximate translations for the names of two Greek divinities. Wissowa cites² these allusions to Silvanus in Athens as examples of the recognized likeness of Pan and Silvanus, so that one naturally expects to find that Fides, also, was used here for the name of some Greek divinity, but scholars who accept this relation between Pan and Silvanus³ are silent about a Greek prototype of Fides.

In the *Bacchides*, Chrysalus Servus, returning to Athens after a two years' absence, salutes his master's native land and adds (172-173):

Saluto te, vicine Apollo, qui aedibus
Propinquos nostris accolis, veneroque te.

Here *vicine Apollo* (172) suggests the γείτον' Ἀγνιεύ of Aristoph. *Vesp.* 875, with the comment of the scholiast (see above, p. 94) to the effect that a statue of Apollo stood at the entrance of the house.

In the *Mercator* we need not resort to the inferences, for there the altar of Apollo is plainly on the stage. Dorippa Mulier is returning to Athens from the country with her aged slave, Syra; as they approach, Dorippa bids (675 ff.) Syra

¹ See Knapp, *Class. Phil.* II, 14, n. 1 (end).

² *Religion und Kultus der Römer*, Mueller's *Handbuch*, v, 4, 176.

³ E. O. Pressler, in a Jena dissertation, *De Plauti Aulularia* (Leipzig, 1908), believes that Silvanus here stands for the Greek Pan and cites (p. 38) several passages in Plato's *Phaedrus*, in which mention is made of Pan and of the grove near the city where Pan and the nymphs were worshipped. He quotes also an inscription to Pan and the nymphs, found on the inside of a *puteal* before the Dipylon gate.

give her a branch of laurel¹ to place on the altar before their neighbor's house, and then she prays to Apollo for her son and her household (678-680).

In the *Mostellaria* Tranio Servus takes refuge on an *ara* to escape violence at the hands of his angry master,² Theopropides (see 1094 ff.), who even threatens to heap up fagots about the altar and set fire to them.³ It is generally supposed that this, too, is the *ara Apollinis Agyiei*, before the house of Simo.

In the *Andria*, when Davus comes out from Glycerium's house, carrying the child of his young master, he bids Mysis Ancilla place it before the house of the latter, that he may himself be able to declare that he is not responsible for the infant's presence there. To the maid-servant's protest against laying the child on the ground, Davus answers (726-727):

Ex ara hinc sume verbenas tibi
atque eas substerne.

¹ After the three comments cited above (pp. 92-93) the Donatus commentary on *And.* iv, 3, 11 (vs. 726), continues as follows: 4. VERBENAS TIBI verbenae quasi herbenae redimicula sunt ararum. 5. Tò 'tibi' quasi gestum quendam et motum stomachantis habet, ut alibi (*Heaut.* i, 1, 9) 'nam quid vis tibi?' 6. *Et* 'tibi sume' dixit, non 'tibi substerne.' 7. EX ARA S. V. verbenae sunt omnes herbae frondesque festae ad aras coronandas vel omnes herbae frondesque ex loco puro decerptae. verbenae autem dictae veluti herbenae. Menander sic '† κολεξιασσυμπρινας χχχ ησ αιετεινε †.'

Cf. Servius on *Aen.* xii, 120: VERBENA TEMPORA VINCTI verbenae proprie est herba sacra, *ros marinus*, ut multi volunt, id est λιβανωρίς † sicutagonis sumpta de loco sacro Capitolii, qua coronabantur fetiales et pater patratus, foedera facturi vel bella indicturi. abusive tamen iam verbenas vocamus omnes frondes sacratas, ut est laurus, oliva vel myrtus: Terentius ex ara hinc verbenas sume: nam myrtum fuisse Menander testatur, de quo Terentius transulit. quidam sane veris proximi herbas verbenas dicunt. alii certa ligamenta verbenas volunt vocari.

² Cf. *Heaut.* 975-976, where Chremes reassures the frightened slave, Syrus, in the following words:

nemo accusat, Syre, te: nec tu aram tibi
nec precatorem pararis.

Cf. also the *ara Veneris* in the *Rudens*, on which the frightened *mulieres* take refuge when pursued by Labrax Leno (see below, p. 100).

³ Cf. the threat in *Rudens*, 761-770, together with Sonnenschein's note on vs. 768 (editio minor, 1901).

Donatus declares (see above, pp. 92-93) that the *ara* here mentioned is that of Apollo Ἀγυαῖος.

Dziatzko in the note already quoted (p. 92) mentions the fact that occasionally the altar on the stage is that of some local divinity; for example, in the *Miles Gloriosus*, whose action occurs in Ephesus, it is to the special divinity of that city, Diana, that the sacrifice mentioned in vss. 411-413 is made, and, again, it is on the seashore, near Cyrene, a seat of the worship of Venus, that the events narrated in the *Rudens* take place, before the *fanum Veneris*, whose altar, also, is on the stage (see vss. 688-698, 707, 723, 725, 768, 784, 839-840, 846, etc.).

The *Curculio* would seem to belong in the same class with the *Miles* and the *Rudens*, for its setting is Epidaurus and the Aesculapius shrine is on the stage (see vss. 14, 61-62, 216, 699),¹ though no *ara* is mentioned before the shrine. The *ara* to which reference is made in this play is an *ara Veneris* before the house of Cappadox Leno (vss. 71, 123-124),² who lives next door to the *fanum Aesculapi* (see end of Act I, Sc. 1; cf. vs. 14). The presence of this *ara* suggests a note of Eugraphius on *Eun.* 1, 2, 5: ACCEDE AD IGNEM HUNC IAM CALESCES PLUS quidam intellegunt 'ad ignem' ad amorem, hoc est ad ipsam meretricem, sed melius illud est, quod quidem Menander aperte dixit, meretrices iuxta domum suam vel in atrio solitas habere aram Veneris vulgariae, cui cotidie sacrificent, ut hoc sit: 'iam accede ad ignem' hoc est ad aram, ut iocatus servus sit 'iam calesces plus satis.' It

¹ The *templum Aesculapi* was, in fact, several miles from the town of Epidaurus. Wilamowitz suggests that the scene in Plautus' Greek original was the settlement around the *templum* and that the parasite was sent to Epidaurus to get the money; but that Plautus changed the scene that it might not confuse his Roman audience, substituting for the original town, Epidaurus, a town called Caria. See Knapp, "Travel in Ancient Times as seen in Plautus and Terence," *Class. Phil.* 11, 6, n. 1.

² In the *Poenulus* the *meretrices* go to worship Venus on the day of her festival (vss. 255 ff., 406), while the *leno* exclaims (449-451):

Di illum infelicit omnes qui post hunc diem
Leno ullam Veneri umquam immolarit hostiam,
Quive ullum turis granum sacrificaverit.

may well be that an *ara Veneris* before the house of a *leno*, like Cappadox, was as regular as Eugraphius says it was before the house of a *meretrix*.

In the *Truculentus* an altar stands before the house of Phronesium Meretrix, who is about to offer on it a sacrifice to Lucina (vss. 476 ff.), pretending that she is doing this out of gratitude to the goddess for the birth of a son, whom she falsely claims to have borne to Stratophanes Miles. The question arises whether this particular altar is always an *ara Lucinae* or is, possibly, an *ara Veneris* (for Phronesium is a meretrix) or even an *ara Apollinis* (the scene of the play is Athens), which is here appropriated to the use of Lucina. I have been unable to find any ancient authority for applying the altar of one god to the use of another,¹ but Lorenz in his introduction to the *Miles* (p. 10, § 5) and Niemeyer in the Brix-Niemeyer *Miles* (3d edition, 1901, Einl. S. 16) both assume that sacrifices to other gods might be offered on the *ara Apollinis Agyiei*; indeed, they go so far as to say what seems entirely improbable, that even in Ephesus, the city of Diana, the *ara* in the *Miles* (vss. 411-413) was Apollo's.

In the illustrated manuscripts of Terence, where we might expect to find the altar of Apollo represented as part of the regular stage-setting, an *ara* is actually found but once, at *And.* iv, 3, and here its presence is apparently due to the mention of an *ara* and *verbenae* ten lines below (726).² There rise from this altar what may possibly be flames, but more probably are *verbenae*, such as are certainly represented as standing close to it, on either side. Wieseler (*Theater-geb. u. Denkm. der Griech. u. der Röm.* S. 66) comments on the

¹ The statements of Harpocration and Suidas concerning Apollo and Dionysus (see above, pp. 93-94) do not necessarily imply such a custom. Clarac, *Musée de Sculpture*, II, 1, 343-344, describes a marble altar of Diana which, judging by its ornamentation, was sacred to Mercury, Bacchus, Cybele, and Minerva, as well as to Diana; again, on p. 754, an altar which was sacred to Jupiter, Ceres, and Apollo. But these are not cases in which an altar, originally consecrated to one god, is temporarily used in sacrificing to another god.

² It is remarkable that the *ara* is absent even from the next picture (at vs. 740), in which the child is shown lying on the very *verbenae* which Mysis Ancilla had spread for it.

peculiar urn-shape of the *ara* in P, which he says is evidently a *turibulum* or an *acerra*.¹ This shape he regards as significant in view of a passage which Harpocration and others cite (see above, p. 94) from the *Laocoon* of Sophocles, where the ἀργυεὺς βωμός shines with fire and drips with sweet-smelling myrrh. The only other picture of this scene which Bethe reproduces (*Terenti Codex Ambrosianus H 75 inf. phototypice editus*. Lugduni Batavorum, 1903) for us is from M (Codex Leidensis Vossianus 38, 10th cent.); here the altar is rectangular and flames appear to rise from it.

The all but total absence of *arae* from the Terence Mss. might once have seemed a serious objection to any theory about stage-usage on this point; but recent study of the pictures has proved them so untrustworthy a source of information in other scenic matters that the general absence of the *ara* from the miniatures is only additional evidence that they do not represent stage performances of the plays.

Since the number of houses on the stage was not limited to one, the question arises whether each house had its *ara Apollinis*. That this was not the case appears from the scene (iv, 1) in the *Mercator* where Dorippa Mulier bids Syra Ancilla give her a laurel-branch to put on the altar *vicini nostri* (vs. 677). If a similar altar had stood before her own house, she would naturally have turned to that, for the prayer which she addresses to Apollo immediately afterwards is for the well-being of her own household. Again, in the passage already quoted (p. 98) from the *Bacchides* (vss. 172-173), it is the Apollo of a neighbor's house that is saluted by the slave on his home-coming.² We may, then, assume that often, at least, only one altar was visible; that this altar stood in the middle of the stage is an inference of Dziatzko, which seems to be without foundation.

¹ *Acerra ara*, quae ante mortuum poni solebat, in qua odores incendebant. Alii dicunt arculam esse turariam, scilicet ubi tus reponebant. So Festus, in the edition of Thewrewk de Ponor, p. 13.

² Capps asserts (*Pericciromene*, 242) that a statue of Apollo stood before every house. He apparently ignores the implication of *Bacch.* 172 (vicine Apollo, etc.) and of Aristoph. *Vesp.* 875 (γείτον ἀργυεῦ), though he quotes both passages in his note.

Whether with him we are to reject not only the altar to Liber, but also that of the special divinity of the festival can only be settled when we know more about the places in which plays were performed. If, as is generally supposed, a play was given in the earlier times near the temple of the god of the *ludi*,¹ no altar would have been needed to suggest to the spectators whom they were honoring. But in time, with the building of permanent theatres, the situation must have changed and the whole question deserves, as Oehmichen says,² a thorough investigation.

At the beginning of this paper it was stated (p. 91) that Wessner prints in italics the passage (*de Com.* VIII, 3), on which alone the traditional view of the two altars rests. His rejection of the passage is based on Sabbadini's argument (*Studi ital.* III, 362 ff.) that *de Comoedia*, VIII, 3, is inconsistent with three other passages already cited in our discussion (pp. 92-93), viz., the Donatus comments on *Andria*, IV, 3, 11, and on *Ennuchus*, I, 2, 5, and the selection from Euanthius, *de Fabula*, I, 3. When we add to this argument the evidence that the altar of Apollo was regularly found before the Greek house and that the normal setting of *fabulae palliatae* exhibited entrances to such houses, that Apollo was recognized as a patron of comedy, and that numerous extant comedies, Greek and Latin, point to his altar on the stage and, furthermore, that scholiasts on these comedies confirm the existence of the custom, we must, I think, admit that there is no adequate support for the traditional view of the two altars on the Roman comic stage.

¹ Cic. *de Harusp. Resp.* 24 : Nam quid ego de illis loquar, quos in Palatio nostri maiores ante templum in ipso Matris magnae conspectu Megalesibus fieri celebrarique voluerunt . . . ?

² See *Das Bühnenwesen der Griechen und Römer*, Mueller's *Handbuch*, v, 3 B, pp. 214-215.